

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 233568

64

ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 SAJ-01 SR-02 ORM-01 VO-01 SCA-01

IO-04 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /064 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENNA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 233568

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:PFOR, PINT, SREF, AU, NL, IS, FI

SUBJECT: TRANSIT OF JEWISH EMIGRANTS FROM THE SOVIET
UNION

REF: (A) STATE 231903, (B) VIENNA 8911 (NOTAL)

1. ON OCTOBER 22, AMBASSADOR ARNO HALUSA OF AUSTRIA
DISCUSSED WITH DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY JOHN A. ARMITAGE,
EUR, AUSTRIA'S CONCERN THAT IMPENDING INCREASES IN THE
NUMBER OF JEWISH EMIGRANTS FROM THE USSR MIGHT SWAMP
VIENNA'S TRANSIT FACILITIES.

2. NOTING THAT THE PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC CLARIFICATION OF
OCTOBER 21 INDICATES THAT 60,000 IS NOT NECESSARILY AN
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PAGE 02 STATE 233568

AGREED FIGURE FOR THE NUMBER OF EMIGRANTS TO BE PERMITTED

TO LEAVE THE SOVIET UNION ANNUALLY, HALUSA OBSERVED THAT THERE UNDOUBTEDLY WOULD STILL BE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES, FOR WHICH PLANNING MUST NOW BE UNDERTAKEN URGENTLY. HE STATED THAT THE MAXIMUM NUMBER AUSTRIA COULD CONTINUE TO HANDLE WOULD BE 35,000, THE FIGURE FOR LAST YEAR-- AND A CONTINUED FLOW AT THAT LEVEL WOULD HAVE TO BE SPACED EVENLY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. OTHERWISE, WARNED HALUSA, AUSTRIA'S TRANSIT FACILITIES WOULD BECOME OVERTAXED AND SECURITY PROBLEMS WOULD INCREASE TO A DANGEROUS DEGREE. HE DESCRIBED HIS GOVERNMENT AS "FRANKLY WORRIED," AND DISTURBED OVER NOT HAVING BEEN CONSULTED YET ABOUT THESE

LOGISTIC PROBLEMS.

3. OBSERVING THAT THE DUTCH HAVE TRADITIONALLY CHAMPIONED THE CAUSE OF ISRAEL, AMBASSADOR HALUSA SUGGESTED THAT THE NETHERLANDS MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER TAKING A FAIR SHARE OF THE EXCESS TRANSIT TRAFFIC AS A CONCRETE GESTURE OF THEIR SUPPORT. HE ALSO CALLED ATTENTION TO THE CONVENIENT LOCATION OF FINLAND ASTRIDE IMPORTANT TRANSPORTATION ROUTES OUT OF THE SOVIET UNION. ADDITIONALLY, AMBASSADOR HALUSA WONDERED WHY THE EMIGRANTS ARE NOT FLOWN DIRECTLY FROM THE USSR TO ISRAEL.

4. WHEN ASKED BY MR. ARMITAGE WHETHER THE AUSTRIANS HAD ALREADY DISCUSSED SUPPLEMENTAL ROUTES WITH OTHER STATES, HALUSA REPLIED THAT THE AUSTRIANS DO NOT REGARD THIS AS THEIR RESPONSIBILITY, ADDING: "AUSTRIA DID NOT APPLY FOR A ROLE AS AN INTERMEDIARY." MR. ARMITAGE THEN ASKED WHETHER VIENNA WOULD HAVE ANY OBJECTION TO OUR MENTIONING THIS AUSTRIAN DEMARCHE IN FUTURE POSSIBLE APPROACHES TO OTHER STATES. AMBASSADOR HALUSA REPLIED THAT THIS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE.

5. IN SUMMATION, AMBASSADOR HALUSA STRESSED AUSTRIA'S FIRM COMMITMENT TO CONTINUE TO DO ITS FAIR SHARE. HE COMPLIMENTED THE UNITED STATES FOR BRINGING ABOUT THIS "UNUSUAL POLITICAL FEAT," WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS A WELCOME INDICATION THAT DETENTE CAN PRODUCE CONCRETE RESULTS.

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PAGE 03 STATE 233568

6. MR. ARMITAGE ASSURED AMBASSADOR HALUSA THAT WE UNDERSTOOD AUSTRIA'S CONCERNS AND THAT WE WOULD CONSIDER HIS PRESENTATION CAREFULLY. HE PROMISED THAT WE WOULD BE BACK IN TOUCH ONCE WE CAN DEVELOP A CLEARER VIEW OF THE SITUATION AND FORMULATE IDEAS FOR ONWARD MOVEMENT. HE HOPED THAT THIS STUDY COULD BE READY BEFORE CHANCELLOR KREISKY VISITS THE PRESIDENT ON NOVEMBER 12. INGERSOLL

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